



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Southeast Area Regional Benchmarking Update

On April 4, 2013 member representatives of the six Southeast Area Regional Partnership Councils (Central Pima, North Pima, South Pima, Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Tohono O'odham Nation, and Santa Cruz) met for the first time to collaboratively discuss the regional benchmarking of prioritized School Readiness Indicators.

The purpose of this first meeting was to provide some background information and additional details about the overall process of regional benchmarking. This background information will help set a solid foundation in understanding the School Readiness Indicators, which will be instrumental in helping Regional Councils identify and set benchmarks that are both attainable and aspirational.

Discussion Highlights from the April 4th Cross- Regional Benchmarking Workgroup Meeting

- Dr. Amy Kemp, Senior Director of Evaluation and Research, facilitated the meeting.
- Update and discussion topics included the following:
 - Historical overview of how the School Readiness Indicators were developed; their purpose; and how collectively, statewide, and regionally the Indicators may be advanced through the benchmarking process.
 - First Things First plays a significant role in the benchmarking of the School Readiness Indicators; however First Things First is not the only partner and contributor in the advancement of positively moving the needle.
 - Variations in the availability of data at this time. For example, there are data collected for some Indicators while others are just beginning baseline data collection and two Indicators require further data development and decisions.
 - Review of the 10 School Readiness Indicators, the applicable statewide benchmark, and what data sources will be used to inform the benchmarking process.
 - How the state level benchmarking is intended to complement the regional level benchmarking.
 - Timeline and approach for regional benchmarking, which includes a phased timeline of when data is anticipated to be released for each School Readiness Indicator.

Next Steps

- The information at this meeting and the upcoming meeting in June is intended to build a strong foundation for future decision-making. Following the June meeting, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Tohono O'odham Nation, and Santa Cruz Regional Partnership Councils will likely continue to discuss their prioritized School Readiness Indicators and benchmarking as individual Councils within their respective Regional Council meetings. The three Pima Regional Partnership Councils have agreed to meet collaboratively and to collectively discuss and work together on identifying recommendations for benchmarks.
- Future meetings will continue to be facilitated by Dr. Amy Kemp.
- Aside from participating in the workgroup meetings, members will also work with Regional Directors to provide updates to Regional Councils and, ultimately, bring back benchmark recommendations for full Regional Partnership Council approval. Regions will present benchmark recommendations for Board approval in April 2014.